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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

35TH YEAR

MARCH 6, 1978

LOANS FOR WEATHERIZING YOUR HOME

THE COFFEE SITUATION

Consumers react to high coffee prices--they stop buying, and the prices go down. It sounds basic, and it is. That's the way it worked when coffee reached almost four dollars a pound back in June of 1977--consumers bought less coffee. By December of '77, the price of coffee was down to \$3.52 and the decline is expected to continue, according to Fred Gray, an economist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Coffee stocks in producing countries were very low when a killing frost in July of 1975, reduced the 1976-77 crop by 60 percent or more.

Since Brazil produces more than one-third of the world's coffee, any adverse effect on this crop has some direct impact on the market price. Frost problems are not likely to reduce Brazilian production now or in the future, however, because replantings since the 1975 freeze have been mainly in areas nearer the equator, less subject to killing frost.

Tracing the retail cost of a pound of coffee back to July 1975, the average cost, nationwide, was \$1.27. One year later the cost was up to \$1.92. After that the prices escalated faster. By January 1977, the cost was up to \$2.55 and to \$3.94 by June '77.

The decline in coffee prices started about then; the October figure was \$3.69. By January 1978, the cost was down to \$3.52--and reports show a slow but steady decline is expected to continue.

Hard hit by winter utility bills? Can't afford added insulation but know your home needs it?

Eligible homeowners in rural areas and in towns up to 20,000 outside a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area may now obtain credit from some local utility companies for weatherizing improvements to their home. Loans to \$1500 (\$3,000 in Alaska) are available to 8 percent interest for a maximum of five years.

Less than one-third of the utility companies who could offer this service are participating. Many cite a lack of consumer applications. Special, very-low interest rates are available to very low-income families and senior citizens.

First, call the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farmers' Home Administration (check the local telephone directory under the U.S. Government) and ask if you are eligible. You probably are. Second, call your local utility company to see if they're participating in the federal program. They probably are; or, might if enough of their customers ask. Third, have their inspection service person evaluate your weatherizing needs. This will usually cost \$25, plus one percent of the total cost of the improvement. This cost also includes a final check on your property, after the job is completed, to make sure that everything is satisfactory.

The moderate income ceiling for eligibility is an adjusted annual family income of \$15,600 in all states except Alaska (\$23,400) and Hawaii and Guam (\$18,500).

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FOOD CLIPS

Did you know that an apple, eaten raw after a meal, may aid in removing food particles from your teeth? Apples also provide dietary fiber necessary for normal functioning of the intestinal tract, according to nutritionists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Rome Beauty apples are a good choice for baked apples because they retain their shape when cooked. For "eating out of hand" Red Delicious are good.

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Wash apples thoroughly whether they are to be used raw or cooked. Unpeeled apples retain more of their nutrient content.

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Apples can be protected from darkening by mixing them with lemon, orange, grapefruit, or pineapple juice before adding other ingredients.

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For optimum quality use apples stored in the refrigerator within a few weeks. Put them in the humidifier compartment or in a moisture resistant container with small holes in the bag to permit ventilation.

ABOUT

YOU

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ME

Charlotte Montgomery, "Speaker of the House" columnist in Good Housekeeping Magazine, just returned from a cruise on the Queen Elizabeth II where she lectured on consumer affairs....

Martha Reed, formerly the Family Living Editor for the Beaumont (Tx.) Enterprise and Journal is the new Director of Public Information for Lamar University in Beaumont. She'll also be responsible for their weekly TV production on WFDM, Channel 6. We remember Martha for her news feature on microwave ovens, one of her specialties...Willetta Warberg, formerly with Look Magazine, has two cookbooks out, "Cooking from Scratch" and "Space Age Cookbook." She now lives in Twin Falls, Idaho, and has a weekly column, "Willetta Says...", for the Times-News in Twin Falls....Anne Thompson, co-publisher for the Rocky Ford (Colo.) Daily Gazette, has just returned from her "broadening" experience abroad the Seagoing Seminar, a project of the National Federation of Press Women....Pat Cohill, writer for the Great Lakes Fruit and Vegetable Growers in Michigan and other agricultural journals, interviewed the Chef on her seagoing seminar. Passengers consumed 7 tons of vegetables, 25,000 eggs, and 4½ tons of fresh fruit on that cruise.

FREE PUBLICATIONS

While supply lasts, free, single copies of the following booklets are available from the Publications Office, GPA, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

"Food Guide for Older Folks", Home & Garden Bulletin #17

"Home Care of Purchased Frozen Foods", Home & Garden Bulletin #69

"Controlling Household "Pests", Home & Garden Bulletin #96

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